

Generic Name: Etanercept



Brand Name: Enbrel

How it works:

- Enbrel is a is part of a group of medications called biologics, developed to treat inflammatory conditions such as Rheumatoid Arthritis, Psoriatic Arthritis, Ankylosing Spondylitis, & Psoriasis.
- Enbrel helps to block the increased action of the immune system process that leads to inflammation, joint & tissue damage. It specifically blocks activated TNF (tumour necrosis factor) that is seen in the joint fluid & blood of a person with inflammatory arthritis. TNF are proteins in the body that act as messengers between cells by the immune system.

Why take it?

- Enbrel has been ordered by your doctor to help manage your arthritis. Enbrel is used alone or in combination with other medications to help
 - reduce joint pain
 - decrease length of morning stiffness
 - reduce number of swollen & tender joints
 - increase your ability to move joints & do daily activities
 - slow or even prevent joint damage

How quickly it works:

- Some improvement in your joints, ability to move & your energy level may be seen as early as one week after starting Enbrel, with the full benefit of the drug within 12 weeks.

How to take:

Enbrel is an injection that your doctor will order as a:

- preloaded syringe of 50 mg taken one day each week or
- preloaded pen of 50 mg taken one day each week or
- vial containing 25 mg taken by injection two days each week (Monday & Thursday or Tuesday & Friday).



- The injection is self-administered into the fat tissue (subcutaneous tissue) of the abdomen, the upper, outer thigh or the back of the arm.
- A nurse will teach you how to give the injection. A booklet & a video is also available to assist you with the learning of preparing & giving the injection.

Develop a plan to take your injection:

- Associate your injection with a daily activity (i.e. take after your shower, etc) & keep a record of your injections
- **If you forget to take an injection**, take as soon as you remember, unless it is nearly time for your next dose. Allow at least 3 days between your injections if taking twice a week.

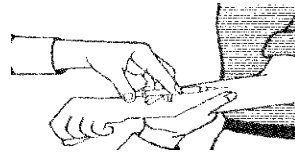


Monitoring:

Prior to starting Enbrel the following tests are recommended:



Blood tests



TB skin test



Chest x-ray

Lab tests

- Do blood tests: CBC (WBC, RBC, hemoglobin, platelets), AST, ALT (liver enzymes) and ESR every 4 to 8 weeks to monitor the effect of Enbrel.

Side Effects:

Possible side effects:

- Injection site reactions - redness, itchiness, swelling (37%)
- Lower respiratory infections (38%)
- Other infections (35%)
- Upper respiratory infection – colds (29%)
- Headache (17%)
- Diarrhea (8%)
- Rash (5%)



Potentially serious side effects:

- Serious infections (3%)
 - inflammation of the kidney, bronchitis, abdominal abscess, cellulitis, wound infection, pneumonia, and sepsis
- sharp drop in WBC, platelets, RBC and haemoglobin (rare)

Managing Side Effects:



- multiple sclerosis (rare)
- cancer (rare)

Contact your doctor:

- if you develop any of the above symptoms. Side effects can occur anytime during treatment and are usually temporary.
- A temporary withdrawal of the Enbrel, and an increase in frequency of blood testing may be required.

Allergic type reactions:

(itching, rash or injection site reactions that are bothersome)

- take Benadryl 25 – 50 mg every 4 – 6 hours or Claritin 10 mg daily as needed
- use an anti-itch cream (Benadryl, Alveeno or Hydrocortisone .05%) of your choice.

Illness:

- Do not take the Enbrel if you suspect you have an infection or are being treated for an infection.



Surgery:



- Develop a plan with your rheumatologist about medications & herbal supplements when having upcoming surgery, dental work or other procedures.
- You may need to miss one dose of Enbrel prior to surgery.
- It is important that Enbrel is not restarted until at least 2 weeks after the surgery. The incision must be healed with no open wounds and no signs of infection.

Precautions:



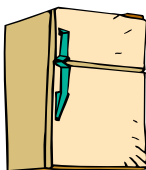
Pregnancy

- Do not take if you are pregnant or nursing.

Vaccines

- Do not take any live vaccines.
- May have flu or pneumovax vaccine

Storage:



- Refrigerate the medication at 2 - 8°C. Do not freeze.
- Carry Enbrel with an icepack when travelling.
- Use Enbrel as soon as possible after mixing medication. If needed, mixed Enbrel may be stored in the vial at 2 - 8°C for

Syringe disposal:

General medication considerations:



Enbrel Support Line:



Clinic Contact:

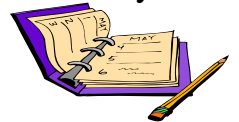
Disclaimer:

up to a maximum of 6 hours only.

- Discard the syringe after each injection into a sharps container from your pharmacist.
- Check with the local pharmacy to see if they will use syringes.



1. **Take your medication as instructed by your physician.**
Taking more medication than is recommended increases your risk of side effects. Skipping doses of medication will decrease the desired effect of the medication.
2. **Ensure you see your rheumatologist every 3 to 6 months after starting Enbrel.** These visits allow you & your doctor to assess how well your medications are working to manage your arthritis, any changes needed in your medications, and to apply for provincial coverage as needed.
3. **Keep a diary.**
As a reminder, record when you take your medications & any reasons for changes or withdrawal of medications.
4. **Keep a medication list in your wallet.**
Record all medications, vitamin/minerals or herbal supplements you are presently taking & any allergies you may have.
5. **Carry a travel letter.**
When travelling with injectable medication & needles, carry a letter from your doctor or clinic indicating the medication & dosage you are taking.



Enliven Program – 1- 877 - 936 – 2735

- 24 hour telephone support line with access to nurses
- Register to obtain education materials, sharps containers, travel bag, telephone follow-up or injection teaching.

Name _____ Phone number _____

This information does not replace medical advice. Specific questions about medications should be discussed with your doctor or pharmacist.